



# Bits & Pieces – Issue No. 139

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When I first read Napier’s book, *Bigfoot*, in the 1990s, I did not know what I know now. I am presently having a second look and some startling *negative* things are coming to light.

Seen on the right are four photographs (cropped and darkened for this paper) of the best footprints we have for the yeti. They were auctioned in England in about 2014 with an asking price of 5,000 pounds. They sold for 5,500 pounds. The following write-up explains things.

The photographs up for auction at Christie’s are the original prints made by Shipton on his return to Britain. They were once the property of Tom Bourdillon, one of the other members of the famous 1951 expedition.

Bourdillon passed on the shots to his friend Michael John Davies, scribbling the following notes on the reverse side of the shot featuring a man’s boot for scale:

Dear Mick,

Here are the footprint photos; sorry for the delay.

We came across them on a high pass on the Nepal-Tibet watershed during the 1951 Everest expedition. They seemed to have come over a secondary pass at about 19,500ft, down to 19,000ft where we first saw them, and then went on down the glacier. We followed them for the better part of a mile.

What it is, I don’t know, but I am quite clear that it is no animal known to live in the Himalaya, & that it is big. Compare the depths to which it & Mike Ward (no featherweight) have broken into the snow.

Yours,

Tom Bourdillon

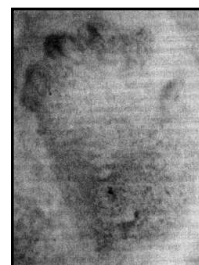
Back in the early 1970s, John Napier had researched the photographs and was told that the prints in a series (photos 3 and 4) had nothing to do with the photo of the single track showing an ice axe and a



boot. The exact information from Napier’s book is shown on the right. Had I been the person who purchased the photos, I would have been very put off with this information. The tracks of a mountain goat are hardly in the same category as yeti tracks.

I don’t think many researchers read Napier’s book as nothing was ever mentioned to me. Dr. Jeff Meldrum covers the discrepancy in his book, *Sasquatch: Legend Meets Science* (2006). I will guess he got the information from Napier’s book. Whatever the case, a single unknown footprint is a bit questionable, no matter the print maker.

Nevertheless, odd footprints found in the Himalayas in 1972 (Cronin and McNeely) might be similar in overall shape and size to the Shipton print. In this case there were numerous prints (said to be very “crisp,” but certainly not the print seen here). I don’t see any similarity otherwise. We



An interesting fact which clears up an eighteen-year-old mystery emerged from a discussion I had with Michael Ward a few years ago. A photograph of a trail of footprints leading across a sloping, rocky, snow-covered surface towards a moraine in the middle distance has appeared in many books written on the Yeti since 1952(16) and has prompted a considerable amount of speculation concerning the nature of the Yeti’s gait, the length of the stride and so on. The truth of the matter, according to Michael Ward, and latter confirmed by Eric Shipton, is that *the trail has nothing whatever to do with the footprint*. The photograph was taken earlier on the same day and in roughly the same area and was probably the track of a mountain goat; it was certainly not a view of the Yeti track discovered later in the afternoon. The negatives of the trail and the footprint were filed together in the archives of the Mount Everest Foundation and, presumably, this is how the mistake arose.

There is no doubt, too, that the footprint on the Menlung Glacier gave the whole business of the Himalayan Bigfoot an air of scientific respectability. Even the British Museum (Natural History) was stimulated to put on a special exhibit purporting to ‘explain’ the footprints. Unfortunately, the authorities were ill-advised, and the ‘explanation’ they provided—that these were the footprints of a langur (*Presbytis entellus achilles*)—caused a great deal of ribaldry. In view of what is known of the altitudinal range of the Himalayan langur, and the impossibility of equating the enormous Shipton footprint (13 in. by 8 in.) with the hands and feet of a monkey whose maximum foot dimensions are 8 in. by 2 in., almost any explanation would have been better than this.(17)

might be pushing the envelope on the Shipton print. Bourdillon makes us believe there were many prints like the Shipton print and that provided credibility. Did Shipton and Ward just let people believe this? What the hell, sort of thing? —00—



I am really amazed at Dr. John Napier (1917–1987). One would think that a man of his stature would have got his facts straight on geography in general and wildlife in British Columbia.

On the right are two excerpts from his book, *Bigfoot*. The first says that wilderness is rapidly disappearing. For sure that's applicable to Great Britain, but not to North America. Back in May 2020 (B&P No. 111) I provided a little article about British Columbia. This is where I live and in my working career I saw a lot of it from the comfort of our company jet, which flew much lower than commercial airliners. I was totally astounded with the massive forests and mountains. Most people don't experience that; obviously Dr. Napier didn't. There is no way BC's wilderness is disappearing. In my article I provided statistics on BC, which are as follows:

It has some 40,000 islands off its coast, about 20,000 lakes, about 550 named rivers (just a guess), 149 million acres of forest (64% of the entire province) and 8,476 mountains (by some sort of standard).

The second excerpt is "beyond the pale." Every year, 110,000 hunting licenses are purchased in BC, along with 280,000 freshwater fishing licenses and 260,000 saltwater licenses. (April 2020). Hunting and fishing sales conferences are held and the animal trophies presented (bear, cougar, elk, deer and so forth) are astounding, but I get a little sad when I see them. I have no idea where Napier's head was when he wrote the material presented ...

—00—

As every year passes and the net closes, it becomes harder to understand why no monsters have been captured, in spite of the numerous expeditions set up for this specific purpose; why evidence of skulls and bones is so singularly absent; and why Exhibit A—be it a mound of dung, a mummified hand, a switch of hair, or even a Yeti scalp—when sent to the laboratories for expert analysis turns out to be something quite different. These are the questions that intelligent people ask. Yetis and Sasquatches are not small creatures; far from it. They cannot simply duck under the nearest rock or fallen log to escape detection. The plethora of tracks that they leave behind them does not argue that they are either an intelligent or a cunning quarry, nor for that matter that they are a very shy one.

Time is running out for unknown animals as civilization closes in. We must find them soon or otherwise there won't be anywhere left to look: 'As the last unclimbed mountains are scaled, the homes of the Gods disappear.'(13)

Thanks to military and Indian Civil Service pioneers in the last century, and the high mountaineers in this, the eastern Himalayas are better known than most of the other mountain ranges where monster myths are prevalent. It seems incredible that one can include in this generalization the mountains of British Columbia and the northwestern seaboard of the United States, but I believe it to be true. Lacking the high mountains to be climbed and the grand variety of fauna to be exterminated, the coastal ranges of the North American continent in the boreal and temperate latitudes offer few incentives for exploration. Hunting is poor and the trapping difficult. There are few access roads, and owing to the dense and non-nutritious nature of the forests, the mountains provide no great challenge in terms of rare fauna. Finally, there are no pilgrims: there is little spiritual credit to be gained from trekking from Eureka, California, to Butte, Montana, to Vancouver or to Fort St John. In the later years of the nineteenth century there were many who did so, in the search not for a Mecca but for an Eldorado, but their sights were set on minerals, not mammals. The only citizens who have reason to enter these unknown areas today are the roadmakers and the loggers. Where there are no rivers, the only economic way of making a logging concession pay is to build a road, or at least a dirt track, to haul out the timber. But loggers are not David Thompsons or Lewises and Clarks. The track carved out by their bulldozers usually defines the limits of their territorial inquisitiveness. (It would seem that Sasquatch is more inquisitive than *Homo sapiens*, for the saga of the Bigfoot of the American north-west is peppered with tales of footprints discovered in the neighbourhood of road-building and logging encampments.)

**Just a note:** There are references to what are believed to be sasquatch in the journals of David Thompson and William Cark.



About 15 years ago, I received a large envelope containing documentation and photographs from James McMullen, an author-naturalist living in Florida. James had done a lot of research on cougars and had written a book entitled *Cry of the Panther: Quest of a Species*, which was in its 4th printing.

During his research in Florida, he had encounters with Florida's bigfoot, usually referred to as the skunk ape. On August 21, 1997 he had "a close-up sighting of the 'species' in daylight hours." The following is from his report.

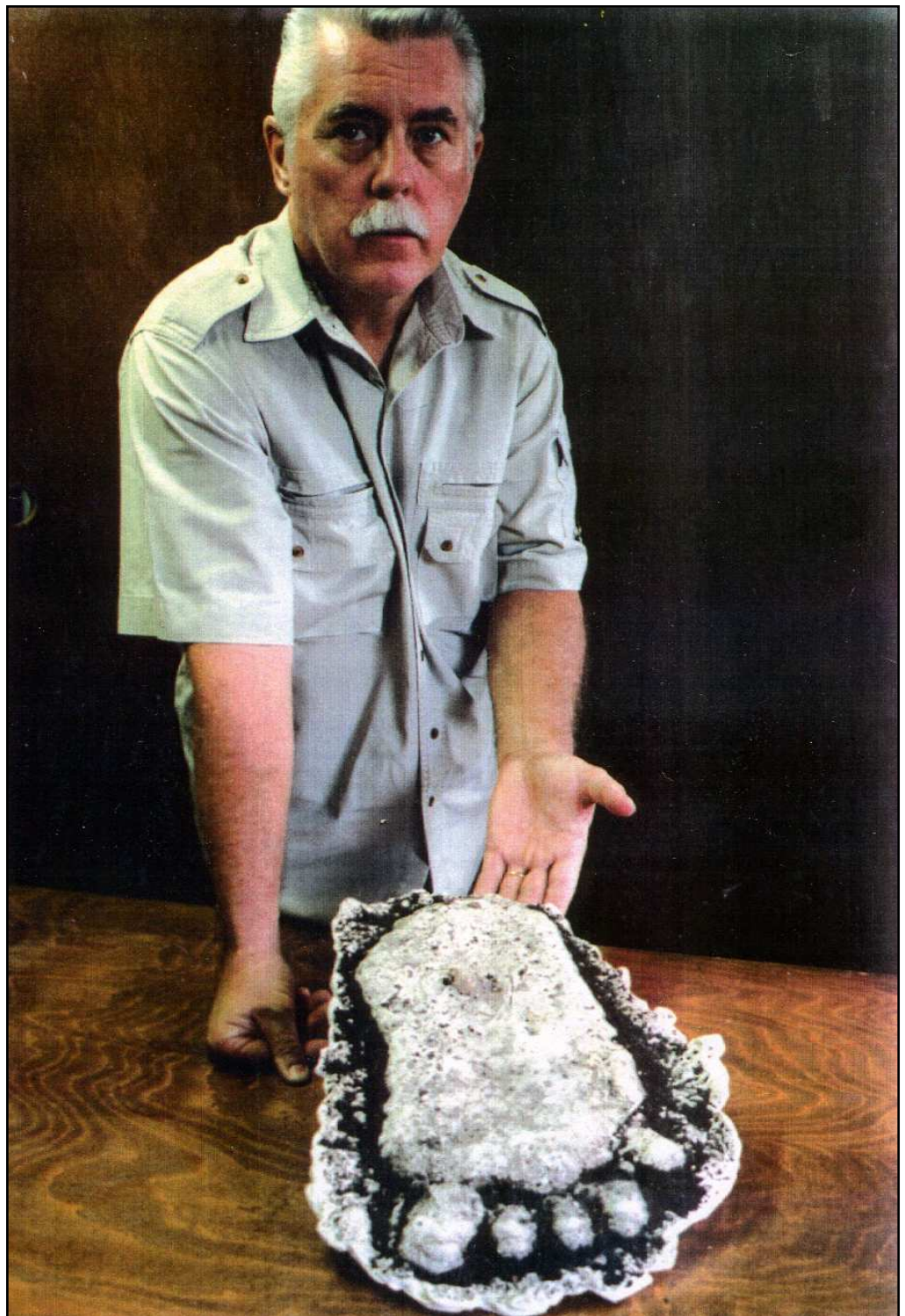
The hair or fur was colored a chocolate brown with what seemed to be just a hint of red. The hair or fur over the body and legs was short. But the hair on powerful looking arms was longer. His chest was free of hair and the skin seemed to be colored a caramel-like shade. I distinctly saw his chest heaving up and down and it appeared as though he was sweating on his chest because it was gleaming. Unfortunately I did not see his face because the [a] palm frond was hanging down covering most of it. But I did notice a slope to the forehead back over the crown where it came to kind of a rounded cone. There was short brown hair on the head. The whole sighting took only 25 to 30 seconds, if it was that much.

What super impressed me the most was his size. The following day I went back to the site and measured 6 feet 8 inches from the ground to the palm frond. There were no tracks where he stood, because it had rained the night before. He was extremely powerfully built up through the chest and shoulders, looking very much like a gorilla in that part of his body. Hard to estimate the weight, but I would guess it could be 500 pounds.

McMullen further states the following in the material he sent to me.

I am now writing a dramatic book on all of my lived experiences with this strange creature I call 'gorilla gorilla/homo erectus'—a primate like species that walks upright like a man.

McMullen's credentials, experiences travels, and accomplishments are quite



astounding, but he did not have a doctorate (PhD) so it does not appear the world of science took much notice of him

The big concern I have is his inability to have gotten a photo of the oddity. He should have been fully prepared. He mentions taking six photos of tracks, possibly connected to the creature, with a plastic camera. Only two of the photos came out, but he destroyed both of them because they may have given away the location of the tracks by the vegetation and general flora in the area. He also destroyed a map he created. He took a cast of one of the prints, which for various

reasons turned out very poorly; only the length and width are useful. The cast shown in the above photo was of a different print.

I am unable to find his new book on his experiences with the "strange creature" given he completed it. Bobbie Short provided a lengthy newspaper article on McMullen on her *Bigfoot Encounters* website: Naples (Florida) *Daily News*, By Eric Tiansay, staff writer, Friday, November 20, 1998).

I have had this material for a very long time, and now let you decide if it has credibility. —00—



In 1992, the Maldives featured a yeti footprint and tracks in their *Mysteries of the Universe* postage stamp series. The text shown on the stamp sheet is as follows:

Giant footprints have been encountered in the Himalayan mountain snows since 1887. Sometimes 18 inches in length and 7 inches wide, these tracks have been attributed to the Yeti or Abominable Snowman.

One might think that stamp designers would be particularly careful with their designs and information because millions of government stamps are produced and the public has the right to correct information.

Nevertheless, stamp designers are just as bad as many newspaper reporters, journalists, television producers and authors—just get something out, to hell with the accuracy.

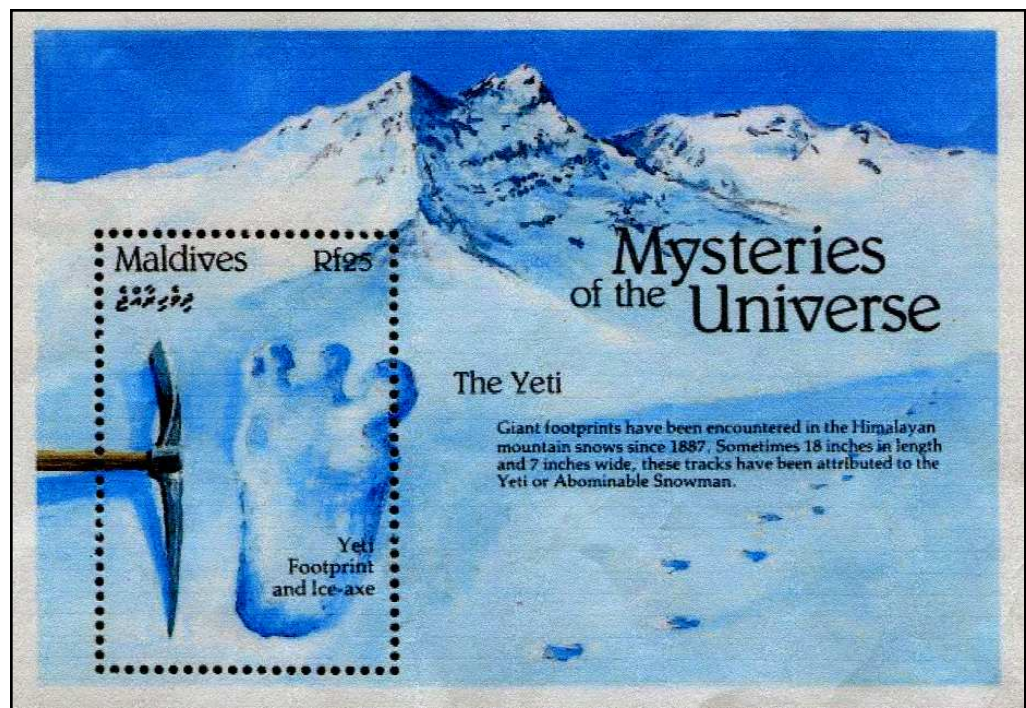
The stamp footprint is a very poor recreation of the Shipton footprint, which it is obviously meant to show. The axe head has been made the same size (length) of the footprint, which was not the case, and very doubtful could have been the case. Furthermore, the footprints seen on the sheet have an alternating gait. Whatever the prints were in Shipton photo, they are in a straight line. This is a yeti and sasquatch characteristic.

Of course there is nothing indicating that the Shipton material was the source for the stamp. Nevertheless, if it were not the source, I would dearly like to know where the image originated—we need it to support the Shipton photo, which was from a single and only print.

I have provided on the right the chart on yeti footprints from Dr. John Napier's book, *Bigfoot*. I am sure it needs updating after some 48 years, but I think it's the best we have. Most of the prints, given they were made by a yeti, are less than 13 inches long. I will mention here that the recent "tracks" observed by the Indian Army are absurd; simply a hopping animal.

If the yeti is a hominoid, as many people believe, and its feet are within human range (lots of men have 13-inch feet), then the hominoid is likely in the human range as to its height.

There are humans who are 7 feet tall and there could be yeti this tall, but most



### YETI FOOT PRINTS

Step length	Print length	Print width	Width/length index	Observer's interpretation	Author's interpretation
—	18-24 in.	6 in.	—	Feet point backwards	—
—	—	—	—	Grey wolf	—
1½-2 ft.	6-7 in.	4 in.	63	Man-like	Black bear
—	—	—	—	Bare-foot man	—
1½-2 ft.	12-13 in.	6 in.	48	Probably bear	Red bear
—	—	—	—	Booted tracks	—
—	—	—	—	Two sets of tracks	—
—	21 in.	'Broad'	—	Bare human foot	Pilgrim
—	13 in.	8 in.	62	—	Double Origin?
1 ft. 2 in.	10-12 in.	5-6 in.	50	Quadruped? Bear	Bear
—	10 in.	5 in.	50	Yeti	Black bear
2 ft. 3 in.	8-9 in.	4-5 in.	53	Unknown biped	—
—	10-11 in.	5-6 in.	52	—	—
1½-2 ft.	8 in.	—	—	'Like Shipton's'	Black bear
—	12 in.	6 in.	50	—	—
4-5 ft.	12 in.	8 in.	67	Yeti	Red bear
1½-2 ft.	10½ in.	6 in.	57	—	Red bear
1½-2½ ft.	11-14 in.	'Broad'	—	Bare human foot	? Pilgrim
—	9-10 in.	'Narrow'	—	Ape-like creature	Langur

would be much shorter.

Exactly what the yeti might be, given it exists, is still a mystery until one is examined by scientists. Nevertheless, I have insisted for years that it is not a monster. Nature really doesn't make monsters. Some creatures are very unusual, but fall short of being monsters, even though that word might be in their common name.

For certain, the langur (seen here)

would make a perfect yeti. It even has a seemingly pointed head and big long feet. However, it needs to be about three times its size and minus a tail.

